

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR GEOLOCATION OF A NETWORK USER
ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

5 A database correlating the geographic locations of users of a network to the network address through which the users access the network is maintained and used to infer the geographic location of other users of the network that access the website through the same IP addresses. An Internet website operator may generate such a database from home or business address information self-reported by users of the website. If a plurality of users that access a website through the same IP address have self-reported information as to their geographic location to a website operator, that information collectively provides information as to the likely geographic location and the geographic diversity of other users that access the network through that IP address. Accordingly, such information is used to infer the extent to which a given IP address is likely to correlate to any particular geographic area and the particular area. Additionally, a website operator that has information indicative of the veracity of the self-reported location information may use that information to rate the likelihood that the self-reported location information for a given user is truthful and then use that rating to provide an even more accurate rating of the likelihood that an inferred location of a user is in a given location.

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